IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application.

Listing of the Claims:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Original) An electromagnetic radiation absorber for absorbing radiation in the wavelength range λ_{min} to λ_{max} comprising a conductor layer in contact with a dielectric layer wherein the conductor layer carries a plurality of apertures of sub-wavelength dimension and wherein the thickness of the absorber is less than $\lambda_{min}/4n$, where n is the refractive index of the dielectric.

3. (Currently Amended) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in ~~claims 1 or 2~~ claim 2 wherein the thickness of the material is less than $\lambda_{min}/10$.

4. (Currently Amended) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in any of ~~claims 1 to 3~~ claim 2 wherein the apertures are slit structures.

5. (Original) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in claim 4 wherein the slit structures are periodic in nature.

6. (Currently Amended) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in ~~claim 4 or 5~~ claim 4 wherein the slit structures are curved.

7. (Currently Amended) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in ~~claim 4 or 5~~ claim 4 wherein the slit structures comprise a series of non-parallel slits.

8. (Currently Amended) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in ~~claim 4 or 5~~ claim 4 wherein the slit structures comprise a parallel slit arrangement.

9. (Original) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in claim 8 wherein the wavelength λ of radiation absorbed is determined by

$$\lambda \approx 2nG/N$$

where λ is the wavelength in the range λ_{min} to λ_{max} where maximum absorption occurs, n is

the refractive index of the dielectric, G is the spacing of the slits and N is an integer greater than or equal to 1.

10. (Currently Amended) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in ~~claim 4 or 5~~ claim 4 wherein the slit structure comprises two orthogonal sets of parallel slits.

11. (Currently Amended) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in any of ~~claim 4 or 5~~ claim 4 wherein the slit structures comprise three sets of parallel slits at 60 degree azimuthal separation.

12. (Currently Amended) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in any of ~~claims 4 to 11~~ claim 4 wherein the slit width is less than 400 microns.

13. (Original) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in claim 12 wherein the slit width is less than 50 microns.

14. (Currently Amended) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed ~~in any preceding claim~~ claim 2 wherein the refractive index of the dielectric can be actively varied.

15. (Currently Amended) An adhesive tape comprising an e/m radiation absorber according to ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 2.

16. (Currently Amended) An automobile wherein a proportion of the surface of the automobile is covered in an e/m radiation absorber according to. ~~any of claims 1 to 13~~ claim 2.

17. (Currently Amended) A panel covering for application to a building wherein the panel is covered in an e/m radiation absorber according to ~~any of claims 1 to 13~~ claim 2.

18. (Currently Amended) A heating element for use in a microwave comprising an e/m absorber as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 13~~ claim 2.

19. (Currently Amended) A tagging system comprising an e/m absorber as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 13~~ claim 2.

20. (New) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in claim 2 wherein the thickness of the material is less than $\lambda_{min}/100$.

21. (New) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in claim 20 wherein the absorber is flexible.

22. (New) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in claim 20 wherein the absorber is backed with an adhesive material.

23. (New) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in claim 2 wherein the dielectric layer is sandwiched between the conductor layer and a second conductor layer.

24. (New) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in claim 20 wherein the absorber is flexible, backed with an adhesive material, and wherein the dielectric layer is sandwiched between the conductor layer and a second conductor layer.

25. (New) An e/m radiation absorber as claimed in claim 2 wherein the conductor layer has metallic response for wavelengths in the range λ_{min} to λ_{max}.